



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER  
JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, TEXAS**

## **Court Order Ward**

The following is the basic eligibility criteria required to establish eligibility for processing a dependency determination for a legal custody ward:

1. The child must be unmarried
2. The child must be under age 21 or 23 if enrolled in an institute of higher education
3. The child must be dependent on the sponsor for over one-half of his or her support, or have been at the time of the sponsor's death.

**Note:** If any one of the three conditions above is not met, then, the child will not be eligible for DEERS enrollment or continuation of enrollment. A child who has no relationship to the sponsor at the time of his or her death, who subsequently became a legal custody ward of the surviving spouse (widow or widower) is not entitled to ID card benefits and privileges. In addition, the military sponsor must initiate the process by signing the required dependency documentation on behalf the child to show proof of providing over 50 percent support as listed on the DD Form 137-7 and according to processing procedures listed in [AFI 36-3026](#).

Required documentation to determine eligibility for submission of a dependency determination application package:

4. Birth certificate (if not enrolled in DEERS).
5. Court order from a court of competent jurisdiction in the United States (or a territory or possession of the United States) placing the child in the sponsor's custody for at least 12 consecutive months.

**\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\***

A. Due to the uniformed Services unique administrative processing procedures, cross-servicing for the dependency determination application is not authorized per AFI 36-3026, Table 1.3. The dependency determination application allows for the continuation of medical benefits and shopping privileges within the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System. Determinations must be re-accomplished upon expiration of the dependent's ID card or when there is a change in the dependent's status that would affect continued eligibility such as: sponsor no longer provides more than 50% support, child marries, etc. Sponsor should begin the renewal process 90-120 days prior to the current expiration date. Receipt of an approved dependency determination application from finance (DFAS-DE or DFAS-IN), showing the sponsor provides over 50 percent support is required. This means a financial determination application of over 50 percent support remains, and requires the sponsor to apply every 4-years with finance.

B. If the sponsor is deceased, a final dependency determination application must be accomplished (as of the sponsor's date of death). The approved dependency determination letter from finance must be maintained by the surviving child, his / her surviving family members, or agent/representative as proof of eligibility. The approval letter comes from either DFAS-DE or DFAS-IN and is valid indefinitely, presented for the purposes of receiving an ID card.

C. A dependency determination is not required for legal custody ward of honorably discharged members (who are not retired and receipt of retired pay) but are rated one hundred percent disabled by the Department of Veterans' Affairs. These individuals and family members are not entitled to TRICARE or medical care through the Uniformed Services MTF; however, they receive their medical benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs. A letter from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, verifying the child qualifies as permanently incapacitated for continuation of eligibility to shopping privileges is sufficient.

D. Wards that marry and subsequently become unmarried through divorce, annulment, or death of spouse may be reinstated for ID card benefits and privileges as long as they meet all other requirements. Submit copies of the marriage certificate and divorce decree.

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The procedures below apply to the Air Force (active, National Guard, and Reserve) issuing facilities. **Note:** These procedures do not apply to the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Public Health Services, and the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration. For Service specific information and processing instructions, see [AFI 36-3026](#), Chapters 19-23.

#### **STEP ACTION**

1. A RAPIDS verifying official may hand write, type, or use the existing sponsor and child information listed in DEERS and the RAPIDS generated [DD Form 1172-2](#).
  2. Complete Sections as appropriate.
  3. Continuing with the completion of block 21-remarks: Annotate the documents used to verify relationship to the sponsor (see [AFI 36-3026](#), Attachment 5, eligibility documentation); If the child is already enrolled in DEERS annotate "VERIFIED BY DEERS," Include additional statements indicating the dependency application, initial or renewal, and other generated statements provided within RAPIDS.
  4. Enter the VO name, date, location, telephone number and e-mail on the [DD Form 1172-2](#), block 21.
  5. Provide a copy of the [DD Form 1172-2](#) to the sponsor and file original in suspense.
  6. Once all required documentation has been obtained, the customer should visit the local Financial Services Office to initiate a dependency application, DD137-7, Incapacitated Child over Age 21 or download the form from a web search engine. As a courtesy, the VO may provide a paper copy of this form to the applicant. Any questions pertaining to the form should be addressed by the FSO or DFAS-IN.
- Note:** As of Nov. 4, 2009, the dependency application is forwarded to the DFAS-IN / JFLTBA, ATTN: Air Force Dependency Team, 8899 East 56th Street, Indianapolis IN 46249-1200. Financial Dependency Determination - Telephone toll free 1-888-332-7411 or (317) 510-0129, select option #4 (pay related inquiries), and option 2 (for services members), and option 5 (for secondary dependency), and option 2 (for Air Force Dependency Branch). DSN 699, DSN 699, fax (317) 212-4141, E-mail [DFAS-IN\\_AF\\_Dependency@DFAS.MIL](mailto:DFAS-IN_AF_Dependency@DFAS.MIL). Sponsors may send their dependency determination application directly to DFAS-IN.
7. DFAS-IN / JFLTBA will notify the sponsor by letter of approval or disapproval of the financial dependency application. If approved, the sponsor must present the approved financial dependency letter to an ID card issuing facility. If disapproved, DFAS-IN will advise of their findings, and if resubmission of the financial dependency application is necessary.
  8. The VO will authorize benefits and privileges, update DEERS by scanning the approved financial dependency application and producing a [DD Form 1172-2](#) for sponsor signature, and ID card issuance to the child.
  9. The VO advises sponsor or the surviving spouse, family member, appointed agent or representative to maintain the approved dependency application letter from DFAS-IN. The renewal process occurs every 4-years for the financial (over 50 percent) support with DFAS-IN, or earlier when there is a change in the child's status that would affect continued eligibility such as: sponsor no longer provides more than 50 percent support, child marries, a change in the sponsor's status or death.

For inquiries on how to obtain a letter of eligibility from the DEERS/TRICARE program, please contact the Defense Manpower Data Center Beneficiary help desk at 1-800-538-9552.